



## NEWS RELEASE

February 5, 2010

**WWII Veterans Have One Week Left to Apply for One-Time Benefit  
All Claims Must Be Received By USDVA Office by February 16, 2010**

All claims from Filipino WWII veterans for benefits created by the 2009 Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation provision of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 must be **received** by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) by **February 16, 2010**. These one-time payments were made available when the ARRA was passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Obama in February 2009 to recognize the service of qualified veterans.

The one-time benefits are available to eligible veterans and widows of eligible veterans who applied before their death. Any change in the law to provide these additional benefits to other survivors would require new legislation in the U.S. Congress. Every application is handled expeditiously so that qualified veterans receive their payments as quickly as possible.

As of December 29, USDVA has approved the applications of more than 11,300 eligible Filipino WWII veterans or their widows; these qualified veterans and widows have been paid a total of nearly P6.4 billion. Approximately half of the nearly P6.4 billion in one-time benefits paid out so far has gone to Filipino WWII veterans with American citizenship, and the other half to non-U.S. citizen Filipino WW II veterans.

***Individuals unsure of their eligibility are encouraged to apply by the deadline regardless of whether they can submit full and complete military service documentation. All that is needed is the signed application form. If further military or other documentation is needed, USDVA will make arrangements to obtain the necessary documents or USDVA will write the claimant advising them of the additional information needed.***

There is no "master list" of eligible veterans for this new, one-time benefit. Each claim is unique and decided on its own merits. ***All veterans who feel they may be eligible are encouraged to apply immediately.*** The application process is free and simple, and there is no need to pay anyone to assist in completing the form, which can be mailed to the U.S. Embassy. ***If sending the application by mail, veterans are encouraged to send the application early enough to ensure its receipt by USDVA by the February 16, 2010 deadline.*** Simply mailing the application by the deadline is not sufficient. It must be received by USDVA by the deadline.

Veterans can also submit their application in person to the USDVA offices at the US Embassy. Veterans can call USDVA at (632) 528-2500 or toll free outside Metro Manila at 1-800-1888-5252 for more information about this option. ***No appointments are necessary to file an initial application for this new benefit.***

Veterans who have already applied for this one-time benefit will receive an acknowledgement receipt from USDVA. There is no need to submit multiple applications, nor any need to obtain additional military service information unless requested by USDVA.

USDVA will have a team of representatives standing by to take Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation claims at the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) at Camp Aguinaldo from Monday February 8, 2010 through the February 16, 2010 filing deadline. USDVA staff will be available from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm at PVAO on those days. No appointment necessary.

USDVA's offices at the U.S. Embassy will be open to the public from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm to take Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation claims on Monday, February 15, 2010. No appointment necessary. The remainder of the U.S. Embassy will be closed that day for a U.S. Holiday, President's Day.

USDVA will also have representatives standing by to take phone calls about the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation benefit on Monday February 15, 2010. VA telephone representatives will be available from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm and can be reached by calling 528-2500 within Metro Manila or toll free at 1-800-1888-5252 outside Metro Manila.

VA Assistant Director Rick Johnson will lead a USDVA Outreach Team to Davao City on February 11, 2010 to accept Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation claims from Veterans in that region, ***8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Rizal Park, in front of the City Hall of Davao City.***

Application instructions for the one-time benefits are on the U.S. Embassy website: <http://manila.usembassy.gov>.

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